

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending. Claims 1-14 are currently withdrawn. Claims 15-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,885,074 to Susko (Susko) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,431,112 to Sill (Sill). Claims 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(2) as being indefinite.

Regarding preliminary matters, Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging Applicant's claim to foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119, in the Office Action mailed November 6, 2002. Also, Applicant requests that the Examiner acknowledge acceptance of the drawings filed on December 28, 2002 in the next official communication.

Further regarding preliminary matters, Applicant thanks the Examiner for consideration and return of the (initialed) PTO-Form 1449 that was filed together with the present application on September 27, 2001 (Paper No. 5). However, Applicant notes that the PTO-Form 1449 filed on September 5, 2002 (Paper No. 9), although noted in the Office Action Summary as being included with the November 6 Office Action, was in fact not included with that Office Action. Therefore, inasmuch as this paper seems to have been inadvertently not included with the November 6 Office Action, Applicant requests that the Examiner include an initialed copy of the September 5 PTO-Form 1449 with the next official communication.

Regarding the rejection of claims 27 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. 112(2), Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is overcome by the Amendment to independent claim 27 that is made by virtue of this Reply. Therefore, Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of claims 15-29 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being obvious over Susko in view of Sill, Applicant submits that each of independent claims 15, 18, 20, 22, 24, and 29, as amended, recites a coil electrode opposed to at least first and second electrodes and overlapped with the (at least) first and second electrodes, and that a plasma is generated between the coil electrode and the (at least) first and second electrodes. Independent claims 26 and 27, as amended, recite a radial slot antenna that supplies a microwave so as to generate a plasma between the radial slot antenna and first and second electrodes.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Susko, Sill, nor any combination of the two, discloses or suggests the claim features recited above. Therefore, Applicant further submits that

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independent claims 15, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 27, and 29 are allowable, as are dependent claims 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, and 28, and allowance of these claims is requested in the next official communication.